

CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE

Dear City Employees,

I want to thank you for participating in the employee opinion survey conducted this past fall. Measuring employee engagement is important, but even more important is acting on that feedback so that we might together continuously improve our workplace.

Results from the employee survey have been reviewed and analyzed by the City Manager's Office (CMO). There is much to celebrate, such as the following:

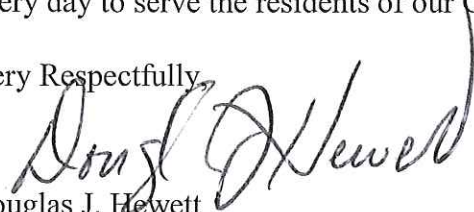
- Mean response scores increased over 2014 scores on 83% of the statements
- Four out of the six key general statements are near the recommended mean score of 4.7
- Customer service, City goals, and City core values are high priorities for employees.

The survey results also highlight opportunities for improvement in our workplace, such as the following:

- Employees are skeptical that survey results will be utilized to improve workplace conditions
- Employee appreciation, communication between management and employees, and City processes for addressing poor performance and grievances received low mean scores
- Professional development and job training scores exhibited a downward trend from 2014
- Overall employee satisfaction shows a significant decline in the five to nine years of service demographic

This year opportunities for improvement will be addressed mainly at an organizational level, using employee innovation. Look for specific CMO initiatives asking you to participate in action teams or departmental focus groups addressing the core themes from the survey results. Results from the survey are available on the COFWEB for easy organizational access. I want to assure you that I understand the importance of using your feedback to make a positive difference for everyone and I am committed to it. Thanks for your participation and the work that you do every day to serve the residents of our City.

Very Respectfully,


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City of Fayetteville Employee Survey 2016

Summary of Results

Positive outcomes

- Mean response scores increased over 2014 scores on 83% of the statements
- Four out of six key general statements are at or near the recommended mean score of 4.7
- Customer service, City goals, and City core values are high priorities for employees

Outcomes needing improvement

- Employees are skeptical that results from the survey will be used to improve the work environment
- Employee appreciation, communication between management and employees, and City processes for dealing with poor performance received low mean scores (these same themes appeared in 2014)
- Professional development and job training scores exhibited a downward trend
- Overall employee satisfaction declines significantly after five years of employment

Recommended actions

- Execute employee focus group meetings to determine root causes for low scores
- Form action teams to identify quick hit process improvements
- Develop longer term strategic plans to improve employee perceptions of employee appreciation, communication, and handling of poor performance
- Form a team to address and improve employee satisfaction between five and ten years of service
- Charge departments with significant low mean responses with developing plans, short and long term, to improve these scores by 2018

Analysis of results

Results for the biennial employee survey were mostly improved over the 2014 survey. Mean results increased for 83% of the survey questions. The most positive responses generally had the smallest standard deviations, meaning most everyone agreed in a positive manner with these statements. Results for the six key general survey statements are mostly at or above the recommended 4.7 mean that indicates success. The ten highest rated statements on the survey indicate that employees feel their jobs are important to the achievement of City goals, that customer service is a priority, and that City employees believe in and practice the City values of responsibility, ethics, stewardship, professionalism, entrepreneurial spirit, commitment, and teamwork (RESPECT).

Areas for improvement include the broad categories of employee appreciation, communication between employees and management, and how job performance and grievances are handled by the City. Key general statements 48 and 60 are well below the desired 4.7 level with statement 60 being the lowest rated statement on the survey and one of the 17 statements that saw a decline in results from the 2014 survey. Statement 60 was also one of 7 statements with a median response of 3 and one of only 3 statements where 10 or more respondent groups rated the statement more than 1 standard deviation below the overall mean for that statement. Couple the responses for this statement with low responses for statement 17 and 20 to see that employees feel the work they perform is neither recognized nor appreciated.

Statement 61 is similar to statement 60 in that it is in the bottom 10 of all survey responses, saw a decline from 2014, has a median score of 3 and had multiple respondent groups score the statement more than 1 standard deviation below the overall mean for the statement. Statements 62, 66, and 67 also received low scores and are in the block of questions on the survey dealing with communication.

The subject of employee grievances and the City's efforts to deal with poor performance appears on this survey, as it did in 2014, as an area of concern to employees as evidenced by the low mean responses to statements 15 and 16.

It should be noted that, in general, the areas of professional development and customer service saw declines in mean responses as compared to the 2014 survey. While these statements did not receive particularly low marks, these areas are worth watching. Statement 72 is of particular interest in that many employees do not believe initial job training for new employees is adequate. Another area of concern is the consistent decline in positive responses between employees with 0 – 5 years with the City as compared with those employees with 5 – 9 years. More detailed data gathering is needed in this area to more precisely ascertain the root causes for this decrease.

Specific respondent groups worth noting are Environmental Services Field Crews, Fire Operations, and Police Central Records. Each of these groups had over 20 statements that received mean scores more than 1 standard deviation below the overall mean for each statement. In addition, each of these respondent groups falls into the bottom ten of overall mean survey responses. Other groups of note with more than ten questions with a mean more than 1 standard deviation below the overall statement mean are Permitting and Inspections – Permitting, Engineering and Infrastructure, Finance, Parks and Rec – Admin, and Parks and Rec – Parks. These groups also fall into the bottom ten for overall mean survey response.

Recommendations

A low mean response for statement 59 indicates that many employees do not believe the City will act on the results of this employee survey. It is imperative that the City identify a small, core group of employee concerns to address and respond in a meaningful way to these concerns. Recommendations to accomplish this are as follows:

- Assemble a core team to address each of the three broad organizational deficiencies noted by the survey results – employee appreciation, communication between management and employees, and handling of poor performance and grievances. Each core team should be tasked with developing and implementing at least one short term (60 – 90 days) improvement solution to an identified issue and developing recommendations for long term improvement in the assigned area of deficiency. Core teams should avail themselves of resources available to conduct employee focus groups which will allow for collection of more specific data from employees. Teams should be chaired by an ACM or DCM with Director level representation from the following departments:
 - Employee appreciation – Environmental Services, Fire, Transit, HRD, Community Development
 - Communication – E&I, Finance, Police, Corporate Communications, Planning and Code Enforcement
 - Performance – Parks, Finance, IT, HRD, Airport
- Conduct focus groups with employees who have 5 – 6 years of service to ascertain why their impressions of the City and its working environment declined so precipitously from when they were first employed. Develop and implement at least one process improvement initiative to address an issue identified in the focus group meetings.
- Task Environmental Services Field Crews, Fire Operations, Police Central Records, Permitting and Inspections – Permitting, Engineering and Infrastructure, Finance, Parks and Rec – Admin, and Parks and Rec – Parks with forming employee task forces within their groups to address those areas receiving mean scores substantially lower than the mean for these statements for the City overall.

Employee Survey Sections

